DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 267 264 CE 043 886

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TITLE A Needs Assessment Model for Marketing Education.
PUB DATE 6 Dec 85
NOTE 31p.; Paper presented at the American Vocational Association Convention (Atlanta, GA, December 6-10, 1985).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Data Collection; *Distributive Education; Educational Needs; *Educational Research; Group Dynamics; *Marketing; *Needs Assessment; *Problem Solving; Research Methodology
IDENTIFIERS *Nominal Group Technique

ABSTRACT

The nominal group technique (NGT), a needs assessment methodology that can be effective in many situations related to marketing education, is used to identify and collect information in a small group setting. It is a special purpose group process appropriate for identifying elements of a problem situation, identifying elements of a solution program, and establishing priorities. The NGT process involves five steps: introduction to meeting, silent generation of ideas in writing, round-robin listing, discussion for clarification, and ranking of items. NGT applications for marketing education include assessing needs for inservice training, training within marketing occupational areas, training for marketing education students, and marketing education program development. The report includes a practical example of how the NGT can be used in a research study related to the services that a local merchants' association could offer its members to facilitate problem solving. Phase one of the study involves using the NGT to identify major problems faced by member businesses and to identify services that can be offered to help them. Phase two involves using a survey to reaffirm Phase one data. The study demonstrates how the two methods can complement one another and provide for strong research design. (YLB)

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# A Needs Assessment Model for Marketing Education

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Paper Presented at the

Marketing Education Research Dissemination Seminar

American Vocational Association Convention

Atlanta, Georgia

December 6, 1985

CE043886

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Abstract

This paper presents a research methodology related to needs assessment that can be used in a variety of settings in marketing education. This methdology, the nominal group technique (NGT), involves the use of small group sessions and has five steps: (1) introduction to meeting; (2) silent generation of ideas; (3) round-robin listing; (4) discussion for clarification; and (5) ranking of items. The procedures and applications of the NGT for different kinds of needs assessments in marketing education are described. Finally, a research study, in which the NGT was used, is reported.

A Needs Assessment Model for Marketing Education

In an age of rapidly changing technologies, various kinds of needs assessments are a critical component in developing and maintaining quality marketing education programs. Performing these assessments enable marketing educators to make periodic adjustments in their curriculums and program services that relate directly to industry and student needs. Offering marketing programs and services based solely on previously developed materials, such as a marketing educator's old notes or duplicating previously successful programs, at best will result in discontinuing programs because of irrelevance or at worst in offering irrelevant programs and burning up scarce marketing education resources (Scott & Dedrick, 1982).

According to Gepson, Martink, and Belina (1981), the necessity for needs assessment as a basis for program development and implementation is frequently emphasized in training literature. However, in a thorough review of this literature, they found very little which provided guidelines for conducting these assessments that went beyond the most simple common sense. The purpose of this paper is to describe a needs assessment methodology that can be effective in many situations related to marketing education. This methodology is known as the nominal group technique (NGT). The paper will first focus on how to use the NGT and will then, as an example, report a research study in which the NGT was used.

## The Nominal Group Technique

The nominal group technique is used to identify and collect information in a small group setting. it is a special-purpose group process appropriate for identifying elements of a problem situation, identifying elements of a solution program and establishing priorities (Scott & Dedrick, 1982). It is extremely useful when the judgments of several individuals must be clarified and aggregated into a group decision. It is a process that provides a structured setting for obtaining qualitative information from groups who are familiar with a situation or problem area. Unlike most interacting groups, in which all interaction among members takes place with very little structure or control, the NGT is one that requires individuals to work with others but does not allow verbal interaction except at specified times (Ford & Nemiroff, 1975).

When using the NGT the group should consist of five to nine members (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975; Ford & Nermiroff, 1975; Gepson, Martinko, & Belina, 1981). A group of fewer than five members lacks resources in terms of the number of critical judgments available to analyze and arrive at a decision. On the other hand, adding more than nine members does not increase group accuracy and the mechanics of the NGT become burdensome when the group has 10 or more members (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975).

NGT Steps

The NGT process involves five steps: (1) introduction to meeting, (2) silent generation of ideas in writing, (3) round-robin listing, (4) discussion for clarification, and (5) ranking of items. A discussion of each step follows:

1. Introduction to meeting: During this step the group facilitator welcomes each participant, discusses the purpose as well as the importance of the meeting and clarifies the importance of each group member's contribution. This step is an important one because when individuals come together to participate in a group setting, perceptions of why the group was formed will affect performance (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975). Therefore, it is important for the facilitator to clarify the participant roles and the objectives of the meeting.

2. Silent generation of ideas: In the second step of the NGT process, group members are presented with an exploratory question. This question must relate directly to the objectives of the meeting. For example, suppose a group of marketing education personnel were gathered together to identify the current inservice needs of marketing education teacher coordinators. An appropriate exploratory question for this group to address would be, "What are the problems faced by marketing education teachers that impede the day-to-day operations of their programs?" By identifying the problems facing these teachers,

the areas in which assistance (inservice) is needed will also be determined.

To facilitate this step, each participant is given a worksheet with the exploratory question at the top. The facilitator reads to the group the exploratory question. Without discussion, each participant writes silently and independently, as many items that can be thought of to answer the question. This step normally takes approximately fifteen minutes.

There are several benefits associated with this step. First, participants are given time for uninterrupted thought. It also provides avoidance of inhibitory factors such as conformity pressures, polarization on a few ideas, status pressures, and premature closure on ideas. Finally, this step allows for the positive effects of "social facilitation" which occurs by observing other group members working hard (Ford & Nemiroff, 1975).

3. Round-robin listing: Once participants are given enough time to complete their individual assignment as described in step two, they are asked to share their ideas with the entire group. To facilitate this step, each group member, in turn, presents one idea to be recorded verbatim by the group facilitator on a flip chart. This process continues without discussion, until all ideas are recorded. Hitchhiking, presenting additional ideas, is also allowed and encouraged in this step to generate new ideas based on the ones presented by others in the group.

This step is important for several reasons. It provides for equal participation in the presentation of ideas by deterring competition with high-status participants, more aggressive personalities, and more emotional participants. It also increases the ability to deal with a larger number of ideas and provides a written record of these ideas (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975). Finally, it generates a feeling of "ownership" in all of the participants.

4. Discussion for clarification: After all of the items are listed on the flip chart, the group facilitator leads a group discussion on the recorded items for the purpose of elaboration and clarification. The primary purpose of this step is to make sure that each participant fully understands the meaning of each item listed. A benefit of this step is the elimination of misunderstanding. It allows for discussing differences of opinions without undue argumentation (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975).

5. Ranking of items: The last step in the NGT process enables participants to arrive at a group consensus relative to prioritizing each item on the total list according to their perceived importance. Each participant, without interacting with others, is asked to select the nine most critical items from the total list and write them on separate 3" x 5" index cards. Next, they rank them in order of priority. Once they are ranked, each participant is asked to give the times a value score according to

their ranked position. The scale for the scores is as follows: Rank Item 1 = 9 points; Rank Item 2 = 8 points; Rank Item 3 = 7 points; Rank Item 4 = 6 points; etc. After the values are assigned to each item, the participants are asked to shuffle their cards. They are then collected by the facilitator. A group decision is made regarding the importance and priority of each item by obtaining a sum value score for each item.

Obtaining a group consensus in the manner described in this step provides for an accurate aggregation of group judgments and error reduction. It also provides for the more reserved members of the group an opportunity to express their beliefs relative to the importance of each item. This step also provides a sense of closure and accomplishment. Finally, it documents the group judgments (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975).

Strengths of the NGT

The nominal group technique merits consideration as a needs assessment methodology for many reasons. First, it provides an avenue for obtaining group consensus in a fair and efficient manner. The NGT process also eliminates group dominance by participants with strong personalities. It requires participants to target their discussions to ideas related directly to the objectives of the meeting. It allows ideas to be presented at the beginning of the meeting without evaluation of the ideas until later. Finally, it allows for group consensus to be expressed mathematically.

NGT Applications for Marketing Education

The nominal group technique can be used in marketing education to assess several different kinds of needs. For example, in-service training needs for marketing education personnel can be assessed with the NGT. Training and/or other needs within all of the different marketing occupational areas can also be assessed with this methodology. Training needs for marketing education students can be assessed with the NGT. Finally, needs for marketing education program development can also be assessed. Whatever the situation might be, if a group consensus is desired when conducting a needs assessment, the nominal group technique would be appropriate.

An Example of Using the NGT

To provide a practical example of how the nominal group technique can be used, the remainder of this paper reports a research study that utilized the NGT. The type of information assessed in this study related to the needs of businesses that were members of a local merchants association. It is important to note that the study was conducted in two phases. Phase One involved using the nominal group technique as a research method and Phase Two involved the use of a survey. The study demonstrates how the two methods can complement one another and provide for a strong research design, although the two methods can be used separately if desired.

Background and Objectives

This study was conducted at the request of the Merchants Association of Roanoke Valley (MARV) in Roanoke, Virginia to assist MARV personnel and the MARV Board of Directors in making decisions regarding what services the association could offer to its members to facilitate problem solving. When assessing the needs of the members of a merchants association, there are implications for both the association itself as well as for marketing education.

The study had four primary objectives:

1. to identify the major problems MARV members face that impeded the day-to-day operations of their businesses,
2. to establish the relative priorities of the different problem areas identified,
3. to identify services that can be provided to help MARV members in overcoming the major problems identified, and
4. to establish the relative priorities of the different services identified.

Methodology

Population and Sample. The population for this study was all of the members (N = 1158) of the Merchants Association of the Roanoke Valley. The study was conducted in two phases with Phase One involving the use of small group discussion sessions and phase Two involving the use of a mail survey. Participants in Phase One of the study were selected by the researcher and the

research advisory committee, composed of four representatives from the MARV Board of Directors and the MARV President. Participant selection for this phase of the study was based on a person's observable leadership in the community (as determined by members of the advisory committee) and their willingness to serve. A simple random sample of MARV members was used in the mail survey phase of the study. Two hundred and fifty members were randomly selected by using a table of random digits. The sample size was determined by using a statistical formula designed for sample size determination (Nunnery & Kimbrough, 1971).

Instrumentation. A survey instrument was developed to gather information in Phase Two of the study. The instrument was designed by the researcher, with assistance from the research advisory committee, and consisted of two sections. Section one related to the problems that impede the operations of a business and section two related to services that could be provided to help overcome some of the problems. Selection of the items included on the instrument were based on the results of Phase One of the study. A three-point modified Likert-type scale was used in section one of the instrument which allowed the participants to indicate whether each item was a typical problem in their business, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem. A four-point modified Likert-type scale was used in section two of the instrument to allow participants to indicate their degree of

agreement or disagreement with services that could be provided to help overcome some of the problems. The four points on the scale in section two included agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree, and disagree.

Content validity of the instrument was established by basing the selection of instruction items on the results of Phase One of the study and by conducting a pilot study with a group of MARV members who were not part of the sample. Reliability of the instrument was determined by running a Cronbach alpha test. This test involved the calculation of a reliability coefficient for each section of the instrument. Section one of the instrument received a coefficient of .89 and section two received a coefficient of .90.

Data Collection. Two research methods were used to gather information for the study. The nominal group technique was used in Phase One to identify major problems faced by MARV members that impede the day-to-day operations of their businesses and to identify services that can be offered to help them overcome the problems. A mail survey was conducted in Phase Two based on the data that was collected through the nominal group technique. The survey was conducted to reaffirm the data collected in Phase One.

For Phase One of the study, a series of eight small group meetings were conducted. The MARV membership was divided into eight segments by industry, as determined by the research advisory committee. One small group session was held for each industry

segment. The industry segments were as follows: (1) banking and automotive;[1](2) financial institutions (other than banking; (3) consumer oriented merchants; (4) grocery; (5) medical; (6) wholesale; (7) service oriented merchants; and (8) small business. Seven to nine participants were involved in each small group session.

The nominal group technique process that was used in each of the small group sessions involved the five steps described earlier in this paper. The NGT process was used twice to answer two exploratory questions. These questions were: (1) What are the major problems faced by individuals in your industry that impede the day-to-day operations of their businesses; and (2) What services can be offered to individuals in your industry to help them overcome some of the problems identified from answering question one? Upon completing Phase One of the study, the mail survey was conducted. Through a series of mailings, 180 individuals returned completed survey instruments. This yielded a return rate of 72 percent.

Data Analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. A value score was determined for each of the items identified within each small group meeting by adding the values assigned to each of the items by individual participants. The sum value for each item was used to determine a group consensus regarding the priorities of the items. This calculation was made for the identified problems and identified services within each

group. Such a calculation was not possible across groups. However, central themes were determined that identified common problems and common services needed among the industry segments. For the data collected from the mail survey, percentages of the responses for each item as well as the means for each item were determined and analyzed.

Results

Phase One Results. The problems identified in Phase One of the study were organized by industry segment. Only the problems that appeared to be the most critical (according to the group value scores) are reported. The cut-off scores used to determine the most critical items varied from segment to segment because of the different value scores within each segment. Each cut-off point was determined as a result of a significant drop from one value score to the next. The data in Table A-1 present the most critical problems that impede the operations of a business.

An examination of the various problems identified by the participants from the different industry segments revealed nine common problems that exist across segments: (1) finding and obtaining qualified personnel; (2) training employees and management; (3) lack of employee motivation; (4) poor customer relations; (5) poor employee attitudes; (6) lack of communications; (7) insufficient information on false accounts, forgery, bad checks, etc.; (8) lack of consumer awareness of

types of services available in a given business; and (9) rapidly changing governmental laws.

The services that were identified in Phase One of the study were also organized by industry segment. Only the services which appeared to be needed the most (according to the group value scores) are reported. The cut-off scores used within each segment were determined the same way in which the cut-off scores for the identified problems were determined. The data in Table A-2 present the services that can help business personnel overcome some of the problems they face.

An examination of the various services identified revealed six common services that are needed across industry segments. They were as follows: (1) provide training programs at the employee and management levels; (2) establish an employment clearinghouse; (3) improve MARV orientation of services; (4) provide consumer educational programs; (5) establish longer MARV hours for providing credit reports; and (6) improve existing services.

Phase Two Results. An examination of the data collected by the mail survey revealed that a majority of the respondents agreed with 8 of the problems that were identified by participants in the small group sessions. Table A-3 presents these 8 problems.

A majority of the respondents also agreed or tended to agree with 16 of the services that were identified by the participants

in the small group sessions. These services are shown in Table A-4.

Conclusions and Discussion

The results of this study suggest that some of the problems and many of the services identified by participants in the small group sessions were reaffirmed by the mail survey respondents. It should be noted, however, that the problems and services identified by small group participants but not reaffirmed by mail survey respondents were not disregarded. They were considered as problems and services associated with a particular industry. This could lead to targeting services by industry.

The banking and automotive as well as financial institutions (other than banking) segments identified problems and services that primarily related to credit and checking. This may be due to the nature of their businesses. Most of the problems and services associated with the other industry segments were people oriented. They were related to employees, customers, or other individuals who could affect their businesses.

The results of the study also indicated that many of the problems identified could be solved through quality training and development programs. Furthermore, in most instances, businesses are receptive to assistance from outside sources (outside their organizations) to help them overcome some of their problems, depending on the type of assistance.

Obtaining and maintaining a staff of qualified employees was

also a central concern identified in the study. Again, outside help associated with solving this problem would be welcomed by businesses.

Finally, the overall image of MARV among its members was a positive one. However, many of its members, as indicated in the small group sessions, were unaware of many of the services provided by the association.

Implications for Marketing Education

Most local merchants associations do not have the resources needed to provide the number of services that were identified in the study. Marketing education programs, however, can provide many of the services that could help businesses curb and/or solve some of the problems that were identified. Therefore, collaborative efforts could be made between merchants associations and marketing education programs to provide these services. Efforts from specific components of marketing education, including adult marketing education, the vocational student organization, and job placement services were suggested.

Adult Marketing Education. Perhaps the largest contribution from marketing education for providing services identified in this study could come from the adult education component. There was overwhelming agreement among the participants relating to the need for assistance in certain areas of training and development. Furthermore, according to Lynch (1983) businesses are not looking a public school systems for providing more adult training and

development. Based on the results of a research study, Lynch states:

> The greatest increase in the need for education and training in marketing occupations will come from the "older" population segments in our country. Businesses, especially retail and other service-oriented firms, prefer to employ "older" workers and would like the schools to develop and offer more adult education to develop and upgrade the marketing knowledge and skills of these employees (Lynch, 1983).

As can be seen from Lynch's study and this study, local marketing education programs and local merchants associations can help each other in meeting the training needs of local business communities. If one were to examine the training and development needs identified in this study (i.e., employee motivation, management skills, supervision skills, etc.) it would not be hard to determine that marketing education has the resources to deliver training in these areas.

Vocational Student Organization. There are also many DECA projects that could be developed based on the results of this study. Assistance in developing and conducting a public relations program for a local merchants association could be developed and conducted by a DECA chapter. The association would benefit from the public relations provided by a program such as this and marketing education students would enhance the public

relations skills learned in class.

A DECA chapter could also assist a merchants association in developing an employment clearinghouse for the business community. With this project, students would learn organizational skills, pre-employment skills, and employee recruiting skills. Businesses would benefit from the services of an employment clearinghouse and the association would benefit from the public relations established because of the services provided.

These DECA projects serve only as examples of types of projects in which student members could become involved. With further examination of the data gathered in this study and a little creative thinking, many other projects could be determined.

Job Placement Services. Job placement services provided by marketing education programs could contribute to meeting the employment needs that were identified in the study. For the programs that utilize the cooperative method of instruction, cooperative student placements could be made to help meet the employment needs of association members. Furthermore, full time employment placements could also be made with students who graduate. Special arrangements could be made between a local merchants association and marketing education programs to collaborate in obtaining these types of student placements. These arrangements could help marketing education programs with

placing their students on jobs, assist businesses in obtaining qualified personnel, and benefit the merchants association by helping them provide another service to their members.

## Footnotes

[1]Although the banking and automotive industries appear to be different, members of the research advisory committee decided on grouping them because of their close relationship relative to financing.

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APPENDIX

Table A-1

Problems Impeding the Operations of a Business
by Industry Segment

| Rank | Problem | Value Score |
|---|---|---|
| | **Segment 1: Banking and Automotive** | |
| 1 | Insufficient information on new residents | 33 |
| 2 | Insufficient information about new business in the area | 50 |
| 3 | Training of employees | 25 |
| 3 | Insufficient information on false accounts, forgery, bad checks, etc. | 25 |
| 5 | Discourteous or indifferent telephone manners on the part of employees | 22 |
| 6 | New residents not transferring their credit file to MARV upon moving into the area | 21 |
| 7 | Credit problems due to lack of consumer awareness regarding credit | 19 |
| | **Segment 2: Financial Institutions (Other than Banking)** | |
| 1 | No credit record is found when an address is off by one diget. | 30 |
| 2 | Credit reports from MARV are many times incomplete | 23 |
| 3 | An individual's credit report is not cross-filed by Social Security number. | 20 |
| 4 | MARV telephone lines are frequently busy. | 18 |
| 5 | Organizational staffing (individual businesses) | 15 |
| 6 | Finding and obtaining qualified personnel | 14 |
| | **Segment 3: Consumer-Oriented Merchants** | |
| 1 | Lack or organized, cooperative efforts among retailers in business community. | 30 |
| 2 | Government regulations | 24 |
| 3 | Communications at all levels | 23 |
| 4 | Slow growth of market | 14 |
| 4 | Shoplifting losses | 14 |
| 4 | Lack of employee motivation | 14 |
| 7 | Obtaining qualified employees | 13 |

Table A-1 con't.

| Rank | Problem | Value Score |
|---|---|---|
| | **Segment 4: Grocery** | |
| 1 | Holding down costs without cutting services | 26 |
| 2 | Controlling internal shrinkage | 20 |
| 3 | Employee unawareness of good customer relations | 17 |
| 4 | Cash control problems (front-end operations) | 13 |
| 5 | Motivating employees | 12 |
| 5 | Obtaining qualified employees | 12 |
| | **Segment 5: Medical** | |
| 1 | Understanding the needs and wants of customers | 32 |
| 2 | Complexity of billing process | 30 |
| 3 | Employee relations | 23 |
| 3 | Lack of public awareness regarding medical services available | 23 |
| 5 | Keeping abreast of government regulations | 18 |
| 6 | Inadequate training of personnel | 16 |
| | **Segment 6: Wholesale** | |
| 1 | Lack of communications | 56 |
| 2 | Employee motivation | 48 |
| 3 | Employee attitudes | 31 |
| 4 | Utilizing resources effectively (people, materials, etc.) | 30 |
| 5 | Pressure to perform | 23 |
| 6 | Insufficient training | 20 |
| 6 | Safety | 20 |
| | **Segment 7: Service-Oriented Merchants** | |
| 1 | Employee attendance and/or problems | 34 |
| 2 | Rapidly changing governmental laws | 23 |
| 3 | Identification and availability of outside tradesmen and/or maintenance personnel | 21 |
| 4 | Lack of trained and/or qualified personnel | 17 |
| 4 | Collection of accounts receivable | 17 |
| 7 | High employee turnover | 13 |

Table A-1 con't.

| Rank | Problem | Value Score |
|---|---|---|
| | Segment 8: Small Business | |
| 1 | Employee abuse of customer parking space | 23 |
| 2 | High costs of operating business with low gross markup | 17 |
| 3 | Obtaining qualified personnel | 16 |
| 4 | Unfair government unemployment insurance | 12 |
| 5 | Shoplifting | 11 |
| 6 | Cash flow problems due to slow collections | 9 |
| 7 | Employee training (too expensive) | |

Table A-2

Services to Help Solve Business Problems by Industry Segment

| Rank | Service | Value Score |
|---|---|---|
| | **Segment 1: Banking and Automotive** | |
| 1 | Expand Commonwealth Check System on a national basis | 21 |
| 2 | Provide training seminars (customer relations and product/service technology) | 19 |
| 3 | Provide educational services to consumers regarding credit | 12 |
| 4 | Provide hotline service for merchants regarding bad checks, fraud, forgery, etc. | 10 |
| | **Segment 2: Financial Institutions (Other than Banking)** | |
| 1 | Cross-reference files by Social Security number | 22 |
| 2 | Provide workshops regarding creditors' responsibilities to credit bureau | 11 |
| 3 | Establish employment clearinghouse | 10 |
| | **Segment 3: Consumer-Oriented Merchants** | |
| 1 | Establish merchants' policy and planning commission to address concerns and issues of merchants | 20 |
| 2 | Provide training seminars (customer relations, shoplifting prevention, employee motivation, supervision, and time management) | 13 |
| 3 | Provide job referral service | 13 |
| | **Segment 4: Grocery** | |
| 1 | Provide centralized training program (customer relations, supervision, shoplifting prevention, bad checks, checker/bagger training) | 13 |
| 1 | Provide seminars in school regarding career opportunities in retailing | 13 |
| 3 | Provide anti-shoplifting campaign in schools | 12 |

Table A-2 Con't.

| Rank | Service | Value Score |
|---|---|---|
| | **Segment 5: Medical** | |
| 1 | Provide training seminars (customer relations, proper telephone techniques, communications, supervision, and management) | 15 |
| 2 | Provide employee assistance program | 10 |
| | **Segment 6: Wholesale** | |
| 1 | Update credit files systematically | 19 |
| 2 | Provide training seminars (communications, employee motivation, customer relations, management, supervision) | 18 |
| 2 | Inform members of all MARV services | 18 |
| | **Segment 7: Service-Oriented Merchants** | |
| 1 | Provide training seminars (employee motivation, supervision, and advertising) | 15 |
| 2 | Improve orientation of MARV services | 11 |
| 3 | Train MARV personnel to provide faster services | 7 |
| | **Segment 8: Small Business** | |
| 1 | Improve MARV orientation | 12 |
| 2 | Provide training workshops (credit collections, bad checks, customer relations, selling, shoplifting prevention) | 11 |
| 3 | Establish an employment clearinghourse | 9 |

Table A-3

Problems Impeding the Operations of a Business: Mail Survey Results

| Problems | n | % 1 | 2 | 3 | $\bar{x}$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Locating and obtaining employees | 180 | 44 | 39 | 17 | 1.73 |
| Loack of employee motivationa | 178 | 17 | 55 | 28 | 2.11 |
| Rapidly changing governmental laws | 180 | 28 | 32 | 40 | 2.11 |
| Lack of consumeer awareness of types of services available in a given business | 178 | 20 | 44 | 35 | 2.17 |
| Collection of accounts receivable | 178 | 16 | 51 | 33 | 2.17 |
| Lack of communications (at all levels) | 178 | 14 | 55 | 31 | 2.18 |
| Bad checks | 180 | 13 | 51 | 36 | 2.23 |
| Insufficient information on false accounts, forgery, bad checks, etc. | 178 | 16 | 39 | 45 | 2.31 |

Scale 1 = Yes, a typical problem, 2 = Somewhat of a problem, 3 = Not a problem

Table A-4

Services to Help Solve Business Problems: Mail Survey Results

| Recommended Services | n | % 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | $\bar{x}$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Provide MARV services handbook to members | 175 | 69 | 26 | 3 | 2 | 1.30 |
| Promote Roanoke Valley as a regional shopping area | 175 | 64 | 27 | 6 | 3 | 1.46 |
| Actively assist the Chamber of Commerce in developing the growth of local area | 176 | 57 | 34 | 7 | 2 | 1.56 |
| Cross-reference credit files by Social Security number | 173 | 53 | 37 | 5 | 5 | 1.57 |
| Continue support to regulate itinerant merchants | 173 | 50 | 42 | 4 | 4 | 1.57 |
| Update credit files on a biannual basis | 173 | 45 | 46 | 6 | 3 | 1.63 |
| Provide a reference book of tradesmen/maintenance personnel in the local area | 173 | 48 | 35 | 13 | 4 | 1.72 |
| Improve orientation to MARV services | 175 | 40 | 46 | 10 | 4 | 1.78 |
| Provide seminars relating to the responsibilities of creditors in keeping the credit bureau operating effectively | 166 | 39 | 48 | 9 | 5 | 1.78 |
| Provide consumer educational programs | 178 | 39 | 45 | 11 | 5 | 1.81 |
| Provide educational/training programs for businesses at employee and management levels | 171 | 37 | 43 | 12 | 8 | 1.88 |
| Establish an employment clearinghouse for qualified job applicants | 176 | 33 | 33 | 14 | 10 | 1.90 |
| Provide quarterly market survey results of local area | 173 | 35 | 43 | 16 | 6 | 1.92 |
| Serve as a central location for businesses to report store closings due to inclement weather | 175 | 10 | 24 | 25 | 11 | 2.05 |
| Offer credit terminal on seasonal basis | 176 | 19 | 43 | 21 | 12 | 2.25 |
| Establish longer MARV hours to provide credit reports | 175 | 25 | 32 | 25 | 18 | 2.38 |

Scale: 1 = Agree, 2 = Tend to Agree, 3 = Tend to Disagree, 4 = Disagree



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